

Exhibit 5

Dear ES Staff,

Last year we started using the concept of a Wildly Important Goal (WIG) as a way to focus our work, and this approach is paying off. Our WIG for FY17 was to conserve 30 species by delisting, downlisting, or precluding the need to list them. We actually exceeded the WIG and conserved 31 species this way! I want to congratulate you and thank you for all of that hard work.

To put this into perspective, below is the list of the 31 species and how we conserved them. Keep in mind that where it says "Precluded" we either demonstrated the species was sufficiently abundant and/or in enough protected places that it did not warrant being listed.

	Species	How was it conserved?
1	West Indian Manatee	Downlisted
2	Apalachicola Floater	Precluded
3	Warrior Pigtoe	Precluded
4	Savannah Lilliput	Precluded
5	One-toed Amphiuma	Precluded
6	Quahcita Madtom	Precluded
7	Narrowleaf Carolina Scalystem	Precluded
8	Bighorn Hornwort	Precluded
9	Gorge Leafy Liverwort	Precluded
10	Cumberland Reedgrass	Precluded
11	Bear Tupelo	Precluded
12	West Florida Cow Lily	Precluded
13	Variable-lef Indian Plantain	Precluded
14	Southern Racemose Goldenrod	Precluded
15	Piedmont Barren Strawberry	Precluded
16	Sharp's Leafy Liverwort	Precluded
17	Succarnoochee River Crayfish	Precluded
18	Saline Burrowing Crayfish	Precluded
19	Whitehaired Goldenrod	Delisted
20	Florida Black Bear	Precluded
21	Woodville Karst Cave Crayfish	Precluded
22	Big Blue Springs Cave Crayfish	Precluded
23	Blackfin Sucker	Precluded
24	Kirtland's Snake	Precluded
25	Barbours Map Turtle	Precluded
26	Bicknell's Thrush	Precluded
27	Holiday Darter	Precluded
28	Bridled Darter	Precluded
29	Florida Keys Mole Skink	Precluded
30	Cedar Keys Mole Skink	Precluded

31	?	?
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It's also important to note that as we did this work we held strong to using the best available information and scientific objectivity. So for example, we made listing decisions on 15 species last year, and of those we decided 7 warranted listing and 8 did not. So the 8 counted towards the WIG and show up as "precluded" in the table, while the other 7 go forward to formal listing. Sound science will always be foremost in those kinds of decisions, but whenever we can work proactively to prevent the need to list species, that proactive work will be our first priority. Similarly, whenever we can help a species reach a sustainable place where it can be delisted or downlisted we will also make that our priority. The WIG helps us focus clearly on achieving those positive outcomes. And don't forget – whenever we conserve one species we are also conserving many other plants and animals that use the same habitat!

Now we have entered FY18, and our WIG for this year will again be to conserve 30 species using the tools of delisting, downlisting, and preventing the need to list. You might notice these tools fall within the "inherently federal actions" that Congress and the Administration have instructed us to focus on. By using the WIG to focus our work we readily meet the intentions of Congress and the Administration.

For this coming year we will review for listing more than a dozen species that are in "Bin 5". Bin 5 species are described as "Limited Data Currently Available – Species for which there is little information on status and threats available to inform a petition finding." From recent experience, we know that we can often survey and document populations of these species, and put in place appropriate conservation provisions, and thereby conserve them without having to list them. That is the type of positive, proactive conservation we all want. Of course, if the science says they should be listed, we will do that without hesitation.

Wildly Important Goals work best when you have a forward-looking performance measure that forecasts the capacity to deliver the WIG. Our forward-looking measure is our capacity to complete Species Status Assessments (SSA's). That's because SSA's are crucial when we make listing and reclassification decisions. To implement this forward measure we need to start tracking SSA capacity in an organized way. Therefore, I am asking each project leader to complete the attached table for their staff and return it to Nikki Price (nikki_price@fws.gov) by December 22.

Once we have them, we will share with everyone the Regional SSA capacity numbers. From there, we will begin tracking this measure together. I have already seen our capacity for SSA's grow rapidly in recent months, and I appreciate the focus on this. Please consider taking SSA training and participating in developing an SSA. We have to keep growing our capacity for this important work!

In closing, I want to thank you again for all your hard work in meeting our FY17 WIG. I also appreciate all of the focus you are putting into building our SSA capacity. I challenge everyone to take these efforts up another notch and meet our FY18 WIG of conserving 30 additional species. I am confident we can achieve that goal, and I look forward to working with you to do it!